l: Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait MI
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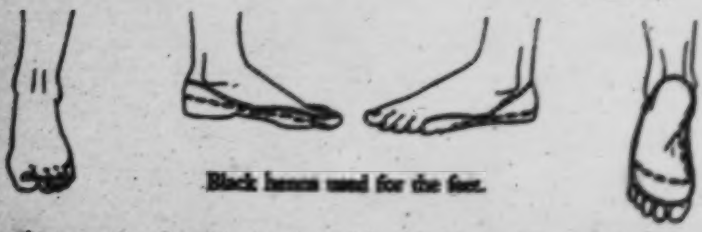
ings turn black and remain so for about twenty days or a month. To wash the mixture off, no soap is used, only water. B 302

The use of henna is primarily a form of beauty culture, but for the feet especially it is recognised as hardening the surface of the skin, and rendering the soles immune to cuts and scratches. K 302

Men employed in pearl fishing always henna the palms of their

Common henna pattern for the hand among the shaikhly ladies of Kuwait. Applied to Zahra Dickson's hand by the sister of Shaikh Hamad al Mubarak. 7-14-33

Black henna pattern used for the feet



Black henna used for the feet.

hands to make the skin hard, and less liable to blister when rowing and hauling up the divers.

In Kuwait (1935) a German black hair dye recently made its appearance. This has come into use as a quick method of applying dye to feet and hands. It is not, however, nearly as satisfactory as the vegetable product, and only lasts four or five days. The best henna comes from Mecca, and the next best from Basra. K 302 439

BADAWIN MEDICINES AND CURES B 767

Camel's urine—The urine of the she-camel is widely used as a purgative, also as an eye-wash and a wash for wounds. It is the common hair-wash and general tonic among the Badawin. It kills head vermin instantly.

Kuhal or *kuhl*—An antimony paste which is normally used for blackening and beautifying the eyes, is applied also to the inside of the eyelids as a remedy for conjunctivitis, etc. It is supposed to keep off the sun's glare.

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757 *Girnig*—A pink dye, used a good deal in towns for sore eyes among children and grown-ups.

Branding—Is universally used for aches, pains in the stomach and tuberculosis. The operation is usually done with red-hot tent pins (*khillal*).

Rawrâw—A wild flowering plant. Used for sore mouth, tender gums, mouth blisters in children and mouths sore from scurvy (contracted on the pearl banks in the Persian Gulf).

For grown-ups, the plant is boiled with water, and the resulting thin soup is used as a mouth-wash when cool. For children the *rawrâw* is crushed into a paste with pestle and mortar, mixed with *girnig*, and applied to the sore place with the finger.

Al Ja'ado—A wild bush. Boiled in water gives a very useful purgative. The Badawin consider it also a cure for "Basra fever" (presumably malaria).

Fish soup—Is commonly drunk by women living near the sea to increase their milk. Sun-dried sprats are given to cows for the same reason throughout the Persian Gulf.

Shark's meat—Among the *hadhar* is said to cure impotency in man.

Cure for the Evil Eye—A man or woman upon whom the evil eye is supposed to have fallen is commonly treated as follows: [753]

A bowl of cold water is obtained, and in the water is placed a pair of scissors (*mugas*) bought from the town, a woman's comb (*misiki*), the head of a woodcutter's chopper (*sakkar*), a small needle (*ibra*), a large sailmaker's bodkin (*makhait*) and a round yellow pebble (*kharza min al nigut*).

The bowl is then placed on the patient's head and ½ *waqqiyat* (1½ lb. approximately) of molten lead is then poured into the cold water. The bowl is held on the head for a few seconds, and removed. The evil eye is said to go straight out of the patient into the bowl and the various articles it contains.

Among the Badawin every new-born child must have a piece of steel placed close to its side when it sleeps or lies in its cot. This nearly always consists of a naked dagger stuck upright in the ground close to its head, or laid alongside its body if in a cot.

Donkey's caul—The caul of a baby donkey is much valued for its medicinal virtues. It is taken and dried, and has properties such as the healing of wounds, or the bringing of boils to a head. A piece of the caul is cut off, soaked in water and salt and applied to the wound or boil, and kept in position by a bandage. Excellent results are reported.

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are never washed. The Badawin mother uses *kohl* or antimony to keep the trouble away, also a concoction resembling red ink watered down, which is smeared all over the infant's eyes. Continual sore eyes often result in the lashes growing inwards, and then only operation by a qualified surgeon is of any use (The American Mission Hospital at Kuwait deals with hundreds of eye cases annually among infants). [See also note at end of this chapter, "Curing Sore Eyes."]

(b) *Worms* or snakes (*dûd*, plural: *dîdân*) as the Badawin call them, are in most cases the result of drinking impure water. Symptoms are anæmia and fits of giddiness. This disease does not cause the parents much anxiety.

(c) *Scabies of head* is fairly common among Badawin children, and sundry concoctions of clarified butter, charcoal, etc., are tried as a cure. A visit to a hospital is the only hope. The scabies is said to go away by itself when the patient reaches fifteen years of age.

(d) *Whooping cough* (*Abu Hamaiyir*) is quite common during the spring and autumn months, and usually runs its course.

(e) *Smallpox* (*Jidri*).—This is the most dreaded disease among the Badawin, yet even if they are near the towns it is difficult to persuade them to get vaccinated. The Badawin segregates anyone attacked with smallpox and puts the patient in a tent alone and a quarter of a mile distant from other tents. He also inoculates the patient from the serum of another smallpox victim. This more often kills, but also definitely effects cures at times.

(f) *Measles* (*Hasbah*).—A common complaint, rarely fatal. A child with measles must only eat a limited amount of certain foods. It must not be allowed to smell any other kind of food. Even a whiff of such "scent" may kill the child, or so its mother believes.

Ordinary stomach-ache in a child is usually treated by branding.

Circumcision sores.—These are sometimes very grave, and are caused by dirt and flies. The Badawin is usually circumcised at seven years and in the month of July, when it is very hot and many flies are about (see Chapter X).

DISEASES OF GROWN-UP MEN AND WOMEN

Apart from the children's diseases, to which grown-ups are equally subject, the following are peculiarly common to adults:

(a) Consumption or Phthisis.
(b) Syphilis.

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(c) Cataract, Trachoma, Conjunctivitis.
(d) General stomach disorders.

164 The ravages of the first two diseases are serious among the Badawin of Arabia. (a) *Consumption* is primarily due, I think, to malnutrition, to sharing the same coffee cup with others and the prevailing habit of covering the head completely with the quilt or *lahâf* when sleeping at night in winter. The Arab has the further unhealthy habit of sleeping under the same *lahâf* as his wife, each breathing the other's breath throughout the night. This bad custom is universal, and a wife would be sorely wounded if her husband were to sleep on a separate couch or under another *lahâf*.

Another possible cause of consumption may be the quantity of dust and sand the average man and woman breathes during the course of the year, especially during the summer months, when by day and night dust lies heavy over the camps and sandstorms are of almost daily occurrence.

(b) *Syphilis*, known as *balasi* among the Badawin, and *firingi* (the Franks' disease) among townsmen, is said to have been rare in Arabia some years back, but it is certainly common among the great Murair, 'Ajman, Dhafir, Shammar, all important tribes of North East and North Central Arabia to-day. Philby talks in one of his books of the rareness of the disease in Najd, which I think was correct some years back. On the other hand, both Dr. Dame and Dr. Mylrea, of the American hospitals in Bahrein and Kuwait, have assured me that from the number of Badawin patients that they now treat for the disease the scourge must be very widespread indeed.

It cannot be doubted that the sea-coast towns have given the disease to Najd *purposely*, and this has been encouraged of late by the huge motor traffic between Mecca and Riyadh, for which Ibn Sa'ud has been responsible.

There is little doubt too, I think, that the Turks introduced the disease into the province of Hasa prior to 1913, though some of it must have also come from Bahrein.

● 767 164 The following is the common Badawin method of treating these two diseases.

Consumption is known as *dig, sil, marradh al khabîth*. As soon as a person develops a cough with continuous low fever *fit* is curious

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how much more often women and girls seem to get the disease than men), the relatives take the patient and place two straight small brands on the left wrist opposite the thumb like this | |. If this does not bring about an improvement in fifteen days or so, two more brands, similar to the above, are placed on the right wrist. Lastly, if no improvement is seen the bottom of the tongue is similarly branded. This operation is terribly painful, it causes the mouth to swell up, and for days the patient cannot speak at all. After this no more is done for the affected person. If she or he dies, well, it is *maktūb 'alai* (it is written that his time has come).

I have seen many sad cases of apparently hale and hearty lasses, beginning with a slight cough, developing a worse and finally dying within the space of a month. They rarely appear to think they are going to die, and cheerfully offer you coffee from the cups they daily drink from. I recollect the tragic death of Wadha bint Murait and wife of 'Abdullah al Jumaiir in 1932 very clearly, and shall never forget the end of that very sweet and attractive young wife. We did all we could for her, but it was no good. A similar and equally distressing case was my wife's 'Ajman girl friend Ghaziyil, wife of 'Abdullah al Ghalaifus. She left us to die in Hufuf in 1933.

One of the first difficulties these poor folk are up against is that they have not the wherewithal to go on a strictly milk diet, which, I believe, is one of the first essentials when treating phthisis. The poorer Badawin cannot simply afford to buy a couple of milch goats or sheep out of the season, and even in the cold weather they are lucky if they can raise one goat which gives milk.

Syphilis.—While the townsman knows more or less how to treat this disease, and can to-day get neosalvarsan and bismuth treatment if he chooses to go to the various mission hospitals in the coast towns of the Gulf, the unfortunate Badawin for the most part neglects the disease, and passes it on to his wife and children.

An outstanding example of how whole families can be afflicted with the scourge is the case of the Al Shuqair clan of the Al Muhammad branch of the Dushan ruling family of the Murair. Practically the whole clan has inherited the disease, and other Badawin fight shy of having anything to do with them. One of the leading members of the family, Shaikh Majid al Aqqar, though far gone in 1933, was at last

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● 357 persuaded to come into Kuwait for a course of treatment. He checked
54 the disease in himself, I believe, but immediately passed it on to his wife and to his son, Mutluq, a fine young lad. Another shaikh, Faisal al Shuqair, came into Kuwait for treatment in 1935. The affliction of Al Jazi's son, Bandar, who is deaf and dumb, can most certainly be traced to the family infection.

According to the Shaikh of Kuwait, who has frequently discussed these questions with me, by far the most dreaded disease of all is smallpox. The appearance of this terrifies the Badawin to an extraordinary degree, and the tent that has contracted the malady is placed far apart from the others, and no one is allowed to go near it or to leave it. Food and water is placed for the occupants by friends some 300 yards off, and the inmates of the tent come and take it. On the other hand, the Badawin seems to have no dread at all of consumption, syphilis or any form of social disease. He seeks no cure unless in an advanced stage of infection.

(*c*) *Cataract of the Eye, Conjunctivitis, Trachoma.*—As in the case of small children, eye diseases form a large part of the Badawin's daily troubles.

Cataract appears to affect the aged to a common degree, and I think may largely be put down to the fine particles of dust which strike the retina; from early childhood he has to endure sandstorms of a type not dreamed of in the West.

The gallant mission doctors deal with a great many of these cases. But unfortunately Persian and other quack doctors in Kuwait and other towns of Arabia do a terrible amount of harm, and many cases of total blindness result from their efforts.

The fact that such quacks are Muslims, and also that they always preach, "No results, no payment", seems to appeal to the Arab.

The disease appears to be worse in the towns than among the nomad population.

Conjunctivitis and *Trachoma.*—These are terribly common especially among the young women of the towns, and the mission doctors at Kuwait and Bahrain do much relief work in this connection.

(*d*) *General Stomach Disorders.*—All varieties of these are common, and may be put down to the Badawin habit of bolting food, and eating enormous quantities when they do get a chance to allay their hunger, say at a shaikhly feast, etc.

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Attitude to Sickness

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Drinking muddy water or infected water is another cause, especially among those who go off to the Haj. It is pitiful to see the numbers of men and women who return from the Pilgrimage with dysentery, colitis, and so forth. 757 164

Constipation, of course, is very common.

It must be clearly understood that only the fringe of this interesting subject has been touched upon, but enough, I hope, to show that the most crying of all needs in Arabia to-day, and especially among the Badawin, is good medical attention, hospitals in cities and travelling motor clinics, which can move about among the nomad population and treat them in their homes. The medical branch of the American mission (Dutch Reformed Church) for long established in the Persian Gulf, has done wonders, but much, much more is required.

One of the most interesting features of the Badawin's attitude towards sickness, and especially wounds and sores, is his firm belief that certain pleasant smells or scents have a directly harmful effect on the progress towards recovery. It is in consequence a common sight to see Badawins entering the town of Kuwait, etc., with their nostrils stuffed up with dirty pieces of rag, inserted in the form of "plugs". A sufferer religiously keeps these in his nose until such time as he can escape out of the town again. The "smell of a woman", as he calls it, is a particularly dangerous form of scent to a wound, etc. 751 753

If a man is recovering from smallpox, on the other hand, it is believed that certain human smells, and certain foods, have a highly beneficial effect on the convalescent. He does not, however, know what this food is, or what particular person's odour will help him, so he goes out to receive visits of all the women in the neighbourhood, and is given every possible change of diet, in the fond hope that he will accidentally light on the right thing to effect a cure. This treatment was tried for Nazzal al Rashidi's illness in 1932. 751 757

In my various wanderings among the Badawin, I have always carried a few common medicines, notably of a purgative kind. These have always proved useful. Aspirin too I have found invaluable. As strange though it may seem sun-headaches appear to be fairly common among tribal folk, especially among the women.

Simple Fractures are dealt with fairly satisfactorily by the Badawin. He understands the use of splints, and usually before putting the 752

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Cures

Chap. XL

752 (3) A sheep must be slain at once and the whole of the wounded limb must be wrapped in the skin of the sheep whilst still warm. Better still, if the person can wrap his whole body in the skin. This is to make him or her perspire thoroughly. If the weather is cold and sweat comes slowly, the patient is made to lie down and two fires are lit close on either side.

(4) The patient is given tea from the *ramrâm* plant, if available, and the actual spot where the bite shows is covered with *ramrâm* paste.

Care must be taken to prevent the bitten person from sleeping, and for twenty-four hours he must be kept awake at all costs. After twenty-four hours the skin is removed, but the tourniquets are kept on night and day, in spite of the agony and swelling of the limbs, for twenty days.

A woman of the Rashaida tribe, from Qatar, who was bitten by a cobra on the ankle, told me that she underwent the above treatment, and that eventually her foot swelled to such an extent that it burst (her expression) at the instep, and black pussy liquid in very large quantities flowed away. That was considered to be the snake poison leaving her, but it was more probably gangrenous pus which had accumulated as a result of stopping the blood circulation.

Among the Diyahin tribe, a sept of the Mutair (Braih), I knew another woman, Nura Um Mubarak (a relation of Hillal al Mutairi), who had survived three bites from the horned viper. She underwent the same treatment each time.

CURING SORE EYES

757 Rifa'a, the wife of Shaikh Thuwairan abu Sifra of the Rukhman section of the Mutair, told me the following on 24th April, 1937, in course of general conversation. For ordinary sore eyes caused by flies and dirt generally the best cure was:

(1) In case of a child, for the mother or another woman to put a few drops of her milk daily in the child's eyes. This soothed and had a definitely curative effect.

757 784 (2) In case of a man, the same thing applied, but it must never be the milk of his own wife. That was sinful and results would be worse than the cure. Another woman's milk was necessary.

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APPENDIX XV

THE TRIBAL "WAR CRY" (NAKHWA)

721 The following are a few war cries of the more important Tribes of Arabia.
192 (a) The House or Clan of the Al Sa'ud. "Al Aujá", "Ana Akhu Nura", "Ana ibn Mijrin".

(b) The House of Al Subah. "Ana ibn Salim", Ana akhu Mirriam".

(c) The Shammar Tribe. "Sanayís", (common to the whole tribe).

(d) The 'Ajman Tribe. "Mu'assa al Haddán, wa ana ibn Al Ajám", "Mafras al Hadid, wa ana ibn Al Ajám", "Sifar safi al Maut, wa ana Ladhala", "Safi al Maut, wa ana Ladhaila".

(e) The Mutair ('Ilwa) "Ilwa, Hal Raddat".
(Jiblan) "Khayal al Sabha",* "Al Jibili".
(Muwaha) "'Awlad al Muwaihi", "Al Batha",† "Ana ibn Madwash".‡
(Wasil) "'Awlad Wásil", "Ar Rahman wa ana ibn Wásil".
(Bani Abdilla) "'Awlad 'Abád".
(Al Sa'aran) "Al Ashwa",§ "Ana ibn Ali".
(Al Sahabba) "Khayal Sabhat Mushabi".

(f) Awazim. "Arwi", "'Awlad 'Atta" (elided to "Alladatta").

(g) Rashaida. "Al Daaiji", "Murr al Dalála Da'aiji", "Khaiyal Sabhat Da'aiji".

(h) Harb. "Ana ibn 'Ali".

(i) 'Utaiba. "Ahl al 'Atiyah, wa ana ibn Ruq".

(j) Sbei. "Al 'Arfa Sbeiy".

(k) Dhafir. "Al Garwa, Suwaiti", "Sabha Tammah".

* Name of a hill in Najd used as a rendezvous.
†Name of Al Duwish's own camel.
‡ The name of a famous ancestor.
§ Pet name of a she-camel.

Note on (d) above.—The "Nakhwa" common to Ajman and Murra, which may be termed a rallying cry or appeal to fight, is "Ayál Marauk."

APPENDIX XVI

BLOOD OF THE BIRZAN SECTION OF MUTAIR

A FURTHER NOTE

164 Shaikh Sabah al Nasir, discussing the question on May 11, 1950, made the
● 757 following statement:
826 1. Rabies was unknown in the Hasa, Riyadh, and Rub' al Khali part of Arabia, and appeared to be confined to northern border of Sa'udi Arabia, South Iraq desert and Kuwait.

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Appendix XVI

2. Three years previously (1947), a pack of wolves, some forty-seven in number, affected with rabies, attacked the inmates of many Harb tents in Ajibba region south-west of Hafar al Batin. The pack bit ninety-two persons. The King sent out troops in cars who destroyed the wolves. Eighty-seven of the bitten persons were given Birzan blood to drink; five did not drink. The eighty-seven survived and are well to this day. The odd five all developed rabies after fifty days and died. Shaikh Sabah gave other instances proving efficacy of Birzan blood if drunk in time by bitten persons.

3. A Birzani retainer who was called up by Shaikh Sabah made the following statement.

   (*a*) I am pure bred on my father's and mother's side since 1,500 years ago. I am in demand when a case of rabies occurs among the Badu.

   (*b*) When I am called in to give my blood, I cut a small artery in my wrist. The charge for this is 1 Rial. Afterwards the patient who has drunk my blood waits forty days. If all is well then he pays me Rs. 300 or a she-camel costing that amount. For not till then does he know if he has been cured or not.

   (*c*) It is very necessary to drink a Birzani's blood within twenty days of being bitten. After that it may be too late, although in rare cases a longer time has been known to elapse and no harm has come to the bitten person.

   (*d*) To know if a wolf, dog, fox has rabies, the heart should be cut open and if inside are found white maggots, then undoubtedly the animal has got rabies. If there are no maggots then it is not mad.

   (*e*) I have given over three hundred coffee cups of my blood to persons bitten by mad dogs or wolves.

   (*f*) A human developing rabies, hates the sight of water, barks and whines. His brain remains fairly clear. Some of those affected cry out "I'm going to bark" or "I'm going to bite", but not all.

   (*g*) No one ever recovers if he develops rabies. He is put out of his misery by being taken away behind the tents and a handful of ashes are placed on his head. This causes immediate collapse and death. Why is not known.

   (*h*) The Prophet Muhammad who had a great kindness done him by a Birzani, said to him, "I ask God to grant that to you and your descendants be given the power of curing a person bitten by a mad dog, wolf, etc., by drinking your blood". Since that day this power of effecting a cure has been divinely granted. But the blood must be drunk within twenty days, and the donor must be of absolute pure descent on both sides.

The above story proves, among other things, that rabies was known to exist in the Prophet's time.

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Appendix XXIII

APPENDIX XXIII

Ref. Chapter XL (bottom of p. 507)

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON "SYPHILIS"

On May 26, 1949 Shaikh Nijir ibn Sultán al Muhailib of the Mutair (Buraih section) told me that the dried leaves of the three well-known desert plants

(a) Geysúm (*Artemisia herba*)
(b) 'Ashiyeh (*Artemisia sp.*)
(c) Al Harmal (*Rhazya stricta Dene*)

were used with very good effect by the Badu for syphilis, when smoked in a pipe.

APPENDIX XXIV

Ref. Chapter XXXII. Camel food, p. 416

In the vicinity of the great wells of Hafar al Bátin, and in the Wadiyán region (Iraq–Sa'udi Arabian frontier) the "Geysúm" bush is only eaten by camels, when they first leave the vicinity of wells in the autumn. It is never eaten in the early spring.

Sheep will, on the contrary, eat the "Geysúm" bush throughout the summer.

Authority Shaikh Nijir ibn Sultán al Muhailib. (Mutair Buraih), May 25, 1949.

APPENDIX XXV

Ref. Chapter XXXIII, p. 443

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON "MANÍHA"

The term "Maníha" when used alone and not with "Dhabíha", means the loan of a ewe and lamb by one person to another who requires milk in his tent. Such ewe is returned when she has no longer any milk. Such friendly loans are commonly made by men rich in flocks and herds to their poorer tent neighbours or friends.

It is important to know this custom.